

A SOCIALIST COMMENTARY ON COLONIAL AFFAIRS

Venture

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SOCIALISTS AND THE COLONIES

THE time has come when Socialists must reconsider the principles of colonial policy. Within a matter of months, there may be a Labour Government in power. What should it try to do in the Colonies?

The situation will be radically different from that which confronted the Labour Government in 1945. Then, only two Colonies, Ceylon and Malta, were within sight of self-government. The rest were at varying stages along the route, none so far forward that Whitehall was unable to exercise considerable control within its borders. This was a situation fairly easy to understand. The Colonies, it was declared, should be helped to build the machinery of self-governing states: constitutions based on ministerial responsibility to elected parliaments, democratic local government, co-operatives to strengthen the peasants, trade unions to protect the workers. As Socialists, Labour Ministers knew that the Colonies must also build up secure economic foundations for their political institutions. Help was to be given from this country through the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund, long-term bulk purchase agreements were made for colonial crops, publicly-controlled marketing boards and a revised mining policy based on adequate taxation and nationalisation of royalties aimed at securing the retention of a larger share of profits at the producing end, and public investment from this country was channelled through development corporations. Lastly, the obligations of trusteeship were accepted and expressed through the machinery of the United Nations.

These were fine conceptions, translated into practice with varying success. Despite the successes, crisis follows crisis in the Colonies, each one different from the last, none amenable to rule-of-thumb methods, none superficial in character.

At long last, the rank and file of the Labour Party has been shocked into awareness of colonial issues. In 1953, resolutions on Colonies poured into Transport House for inclusion in the Party Conference agenda, the country rang from end to end with furious protests, and the basic generosity of the movement showed itself in enthusiastic support for proposals to give economic help to under-developed countries. The desire to do something positive emerged just at the moment when power has passed or is passing steadily from our hands. This is the new situation which calls for new understanding.

In many Colonies, in regard to internal affairs, the British Government must now be content to wield influence rather than power. The West

FABIAN COLONIAL BUREAU

MEMBERS' MEETING

A special meeting has been arranged to discuss the 1953 Annual Report of the Colonial Bureau, published in this month's *Venture*.

Chairman : REGINALD SORENSEN, MP

RITA HINDEN will introduce the Report

Open to £3 members of the Fabian Society, members of the Colonial Bureau and representatives of local Fabian Societies. Please bring your May copy of *Venture*.

2.30 p.m., Saturday, May 15th

CAXTON HALL, SW1

(Near St. James's Park Station)

Indian islands, the West African territories, and (unfortunately, in our opinion) the new Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, are very nearly self-governing except in external relations. Even Kenya, with unofficials holding ministerial posts, is withdrawing itself from Colonial Office control. Uganda, Tanganyika and Somaliland in Africa, Borneo and Sarawak in Asia, are the only territories in which, for the time being, the 'nation-building' policy of 1945-51 is still wholly relevant. Malaya is well within that debatable country in which foreign and colonial policies merge. Mauritius, Hong Kong, the Pacific islands, the Mediterranean Colonies, Aden, the Falklands and others are too small and isolated to stand on their own, and require complete re-examination. British Guiana, and perhaps British Honduras, pose the final problem of the right use to be made of the last remnants of power. The whole Commonwealth structure, indeed, is already the subject of discussion. For us, then, it is more than ever necessary to recognise, as we stressed in our Annual Report last year, that 'those who hope to influence the course of events must direct their attention to the local forces which determine it.'¹ This is the main conception which has informed the activities of the Bureau of which details will be found on pages 6 and 7 of this issue.

In 1953, the Bureau concentrated its main attention on the most difficult Colony of all, Kenya. In previous years, a start had been made in assessing the relevance and measure of success of the Labour Government's policies. *The Way Forward, Trusteeship in Practice, Common Sense and Colonial Development*, were the principal pamphlets concerned with general issues. There were also studies of particular areas, *British Central Africa? Troubled Uganda, Dilemma in Malaya, West African Ferment, Challenge to the British Caribbean and East African Future*, and of a specific constitutional problem in *Self-Government and the Communal Problem* and *Advance to Democracy*. Last year, as reference to the pages of *Venture* will show, there was a continuing study of marketing funds, co-operatives, and public corporations. On the basis of such investigations, a sub-committee of the Advisory Committee was able to make practical proposals for Kenya. The Bureau also published *Malayan Perspective*, by Mr. Derrick Sington. These studies, some incomplete, provide part of the raw material for the formulation of a Socialist policy appropriate to the new circumstances. It is to this restatement that the Bureau must now address itself. A study on colonial trade unions is in preparation; a reconsideration of the principles of policy is being made;

and the first pamphlets in the *Approach to Africa* series will appear this year. In the last named, an attempt will be made to examine some aspects of the impact of western civilisation on Africa, where for many years to come the main difficulties and opportunities will lie in the sphere of human relations.

It is not the function of the Bureau to make Labour Party policy or to establish contacts abroad in the name of the Labour Party. The Labour Party and the T.U.C. are indeed better equipped for these tasks than they have ever been, while the Co-operative movement is showing constantly increasing interest in colonial co-operatives. Nevertheless, the Bureau has a place in the work of the wider movement. It is the only organisation exclusively concerned with colonial affairs which maintains a consistently Socialist approach. It has colonial members—some of them very eminent ones—who can give advice and criticism when the need arises, and through its links with colonial organisations it has extensive sources of information on conditions and opinions in colonial territories. In this way, it is able to provide a channel, however small, for that two-way traffic of ideas which is the essence of the relationship of friendly equality which we all try to achieve. It can do this precisely because it enjoys the traditional freedom of expression of the Fabian Society. The Bureau is not compelled to think that a black man is always right because he is black, that the Labour Party is incapable of error, or that the Bureau can do no wrong. On the contrary, the limitations of all three are only too sadly evident. But we can and do claim to make a useful contribution to the general discussion, and we do so in the faith that the colonial peoples have themselves a contribution to make to the broader universal society of free men.

It is not possible for a body with the Bureau's resources to undertake long-term research of an academic nature. It is possible, however, to follow events in individual territories fairly closely and to know where to go quickly for information when the need arises. This work must be carried on at all costs, since this is the only way to avoid snap judgments when crises occur. In 1953 alone there were, besides the continuing emergencies in Kenya and Malaya, serious crises in Nigeria, British Guiana and Uganda, and in addition, the imposition of Federation on the Africans of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. In none of these was a simple issue involved. There will undoubtedly be many more equally difficult situations in the future. It is essential that the Labour movement should build up an informed body of opinion before they arise.

¹ *Venture*, March, 1953, page 3.

(Continued on page 12)

A DEFINITE REFUSAL

WE hope the people of South Africa now fully understand that there is no division amongst the British people on the subject of the transfer of Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland to the Union. The decision rests with the British Parliament, and Mr. Churchill made it clear in his statement in the House of Commons on April 13, as did Lord Swinton (in more detail) in the House of Lords, that the British Government is not prepared to recommend a transfer to Parliament at the present time. Pressed by Mr. Sorensen to clarify the British obligation to 'consult' the inhabitants before taking any step, Mr. Churchill hedged, as all Ministers have done in the past. He should, however, now give an undertaking that consultation must be accompanied by consent, for his Government, as Dr. Malan has quite properly pointed out, consulted the Africans of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland and then federated their territories with Southern Rhodesia against their wish. The position is most unsatisfactory even though a negative answer has been given. Nobody in this country wishes to set aside agreements or to persecute South Africa. We all know that there are humane people in the Union who are trying to make themselves politically effective. That they have a tradition behind them is emphasised by a writer on page 8 of this issue. But how long can South Africa go on like this? The recent T.U.C. delegation found the Nationalist Government using the bogey of Communism to challenge the very existence of the trade unions, and commented:

'Such a situation in any other country with a trade union background would bring together for the common good all that is best in trade unionism. The challenge would be accepted, petty quarrels would be forgotten, unity would come, even through compromise—but unity would come. We found instead apathy and fear; we found compromise, it is true, but compromise amongst the wrong people, between the authors of the legislation which threatens to destroy, and those who should be leading the struggle. There are good trade unionists who would fight if they knew how to, but who feel the cards are stacked against them.'

This description could be aptly given to the whole field of public life in South Africa. As long as this is the case, it is useless for the Union Parliament to pass resolutions about the Protectorates. It is also useless for British sympathisers to sit back in moral rectitude. An appeal for funds for practical help, e.g. to trade unions, is being made by E. S. Sachs, Fund for African Democracy, 6, Endsleigh Street, London, S.W.1.

ANOTHER GUIANA?

IT seems unlikely that the general election in British Honduras will precipitate a crisis comparable to that of British Guiana. Sir Reginald Sharpe's enquiry into the foreign contacts of the People's United Party revealed that

'certain specified persons, who are leaders of the P.U.P., have on various occasions sought, and on one occasion received, financial assistance from the Guatemalan Government, and that they communicated with that Government on party policy.'¹

These findings—hardly unexpected—have not affected the decision to hold elections. 'We are trying to produce leaders, not martyrs,' the Governor broadcast on April 5, 'We do not take judicial, police or military action against people for political deviations involving no legal crime whatever.' But the reform of the Executive Council is to be delayed until the results of the election have been considered. Thus British Honduras may continue to lag behind. Its pace of political advance has always been uninspiring. An unofficial majority was introduced in the legislature in 1892, but there were no elected members till 1935. The new reforms give an elected majority for the first time and remove property and income qualifications for the franchise. The proposed legislature, however, is an unsuitable vehicle for revolution. The three *ex-officio* members are to be retained, the nominated seats reduced from four to three and the elective seats increased from six to nine. Even if the P.U.P. wins all nine seats it cannot control the entire executive. At present, there is only one elected member on Executive Council. When the reformed Council is constituted (if it is decided to proceed to the second stage after all) there will be three *ex-officio* members as well as the Governor, four elected members, and two nominated members of the Legislative Assembly. The Executive Council will become the principal instrument of policy and its members may be given oversight of departments, but they will not be Ministers, nor will there be a 'Leader of Government Business.' As the Governor will retain reserve powers it seems unlikely that this extremely moderate constitution will be subverted whoever wins the election.

The fact that this danger has been discussed at all arises partly from the link of the P.U.P. with Guatemala, and partly from the absence of any effective alternative to the P.U.P., which is appealing to the electorate on an attractive programme of improved education, water supplies and housing, a 40-hour week, and the exclusion of expatriates from the civil service. It is not necessary

¹ Reply of Secretary of State to Mr. Royle, House of Commons, 7.4.54.

to prove that these things can be obtained, and only too easy to show that existing conditions require improvement. There is poverty and there is illiteracy. There is no cohesion. Many of the economic development schemes launched since the war have failed. Despite heavy expenditure from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund and despite the fact that no grant-in-aid from the United Kingdom was required in 1953 (for the first time for over 20 years) the belated improvements now taking place are slow in effect. They provide no inspiring electoral slogans, and there is no vigorous party to put them across. The P.U.P. leaders, on the other hand, are backed by the General Workers' Union, which claimed a nominal membership of 8,500 at the end of 1952, as against a total of 1,006 divided between the five other registered unions. Their victory seems a certainty, and would arouse only friendly sympathy here if they were not so young and inexperienced, and so bitterly anti-British and anti-West Indian. Their programme of immediate independence outside the Commonwealth is probably intended to lead to union with Guatemala. If this were

attempted, opinions might differ on its possible benefit to the country, but it could hardly fail to provoke a constitutional crisis in which the British Government would have to decide whether to ignore an apparent popular verdict or allow the Colony to embark on a course which might well take it into the orbit of its illiberal and undemocratic neighbour. Nor is confidence inspired by the report that

'Four of the P.U.P. men have been in prison, two for sedition, one for misappropriation of funds, and one for stealing petrol. The P.U.P. alleges that its opponents include one convicted smuggler, one unfrocked doctor, and two who misappropriated company funds. . . These charges are all made at public meetings by opposing candidates naming names.'²

Is there no one in British Honduras able and willing to build up a decent, progressive, constructive national movement? If not, how can self-government and a satisfactory social life for its people ever be achieved, whatever the British Government does?

² *Manchester Guardian*, 19.4.54.

IMPRESSIONS OF TANGANYIKA

by Marjorie Nicholson

TANGANYIKA is a difficult country—indeed, not a country at all at the present time. There are, patches where Africans are thickly settled, where water is available, the land is green and the people prosperous. I visited one of these, on the slopes of Kilimanjaro. There are highlands, in both north and south, where small numbers of Europeans and one or two Asians are settled as farmers, centred on Arusha and Iringa. There are the coastal towns, backed by areas of cultivation, where Asians and Europeans dominate the atmosphere, and you feel that here the African long ago lost his country, if ever he had it. And right down the centre, grasslands, bush and waste, where Africans drive their cattle or cultivate according to their temperament and the rainfall. I saw this land green from the first rains after months of drought, but even then it did not look very promising. I saw nothing of western or southern Tanganyika, and nothing of the north-west except from aeroplanes and the Lake Victoria steamer.

Looked at politically, the scene is equally patchy. None of the three major racial communities is united within itself or with any other. There are forward-looking people, with ideas for the future which are well in advance of the present state of the country,

in the administration and amongst the political leaders. It is impossible for a hurried visitor to estimate which group, official or unofficial, is the more divorced from the people, but divorced they both are. In the circumstances, there is no national movement, and the country is quiet.

This quiet can produce complacency, and often it does. 'Tanganyika has plenty of time to grow normally if the pace is not forced,' I was told by some; or, 'We have no racial difficulties and we don't intend to have any,' by others. But there were also those who were uneasy, and not only because the Kikuyu were being rounded up in the north or because rumour has a clear run along the roads from Kenya. One unofficial with many years' experience of the country told me that the administration was overloaded and that nowadays 'not only does the D.C. not know the people, but nobody knows them.' Another European went further: 'We don't know the people, we don't know the country, we don't know the soil.' A third spoke of the bewilderment of the Africans, who were always consulted (in Swahili) by officials, but generally agreed whether or not they understood what was being suggested to them. In this area, he said, no African would question the opinion of an administrative officer 'on any subject whatsoever.'

There is uncertainty about the future of the country as a Trust Territory, fear of Kenya, fear of the East African High Commission, fear of the Capricorn proposal for ultimate federation with Central Africa, fear of India, fear of Mau Mau, fear of immigration—these amongst the politically conscious of different races, and at the bottom, signs of that turning away from the white man summed up in the oft-repeated statement 'The African attitude has changed.'

It makes no difference that some or all of these fears are illusory: they are there. They are part of the customary frustration of life in a colonial territory which has not yet passed the bureaucratic stage. This stage is infuriating for all unofficials, particularly when, as in Tanganyika, the country is so huge and the populous districts so scattered that the task of organising any force which can make an impression on the Government is impossible for the poor and difficult for the rich. The bureaucracy itself is the only force capable at present of carrying through any major change, and this it is trying to do. The changeover from native administration to local government is everywhere being attempted, with varying success. In one place I was told there were good discussions in the District Council, but that there would be none at all if the District Commissioner did not ensure that there was an agenda to discuss. On Kilimanjaro, on the other hand, the Chagga Council, with its recently-elected Paramount Chief just getting into his stride, appears to be full of vigour and to have great potentiality. Above district level, there has been some uncertainty in direction. The provincial councils of the post-war policy have not materialised, with one exception which is not judged a success. Inter-racial county councils are accepted for the future, but the practical difficulties of assigning suitable functions and securing representation have not yet been overcome.

The danger is that with so little pressure from below the administration has little but its own convictions to drive it forward. Where the conviction is lacking, nothing happens. This is seen in the handling of the sections of the Mackenzie Report dealing with elections to the Legislative Council. That body is at present wholly nonnominated. A major victory has been gained in that political leaders of all races have agreed to parity of representation as the next stage, and have expressed their ultimate belief in some form of common roll. But nobody is prepared to grasp the nettle of the franchise, even to the extent of carrying out the proposal for common roll elections with reserved seats in Dar-es-Salaam.

It can be argued that it is better to delay a change which may arouse inter-racial controversy, and it has to be recognised that the delay involves a political sacrifice for the European community rather than the African, since the Europeans have asked for election in the past while only a handful of Africans have shown any interest in the subject. But while delay may prolong harmony it also prolongs frustration. And it has the appalling effect of relieving the political leaders of any real need to organise or educate the mass of the population. It is derived from a political

analysis which, in my view, puts the emphasis on the wrong factor. The desire is to avoid racial strife, but the real problem in Tanganyika is to promote African advancement. It is true that this is being promoted at local level, but at territorial level (which is the danger-point, unless Tanganyika is to have a quite different experience from other African territories) there are few unofficials who pay any attention to the political education of the Africans. No extra-mural tutors are at work, as they are in Uganda; the British Council exists but has only a small staff; the press is embryonic; the African Association is promising and has some intelligent and sincere leaders, but its resources are pathetically small. The non-Africans, on the whole, appear to think that it is no concern of theirs.

The same weakness is visible in other fields. Where there are good labour conditions (and this is not everywhere) they exist rather by the grace of the employer and the authority of the Government than by the pressure of the workers. A number of complaints were made to me about labour conditions, but no one was prepared to take them to the Labour Officers. With African employers the Labour Department is almost powerless. Most of the agricultural workers are migrants, ill-educated, and, where labour is scarce, often very poor labour. They do little or nothing to help themselves and they have no intention of remaining long away from their own land. The Labour Department is having some success with a policy of promoting works councils in transport, hospitals and such establishments, and there have been arbitration awards for dock labour. If the establishment of negotiating machinery goes hand in hand with the development of trade unions, the workers should begin to stand on their own feet. Some, of course, are already doing so, and if they can get a few trade union successes (by contrast with one or two notorious failures up to date) a movement may develop.

This analysis of Tanganyika's situation may be too pessimistic. Perhaps Tanganyika *will* have years and years ahead for slow development. But it seemed to me that the dangers are there all round, not from conditions within the territory, but from events outside. These dangers can be brought inside if immigration is allowed to expand, as some European leaders are demanding. Except for the coastal belt, Tanganyika is an African country and the Africans should be given effective assurances that it will remain so. If they are given encouragement and confidence, there is no reason at all why the present apathy should continue. The possibilities have already been demonstrated in Moshi, where economic and social advance, achieved through co-operatives, have provided a basis for political development. Why should other tribes not do what the Chagga have done? Why, if it can be done on a tribal scale, should it not happen on a territorial scale? There is no reason why Tanganyika should not become a country. There is every reason to believe that it can avoid the fate of Kenya if enough people cast out the sin of complacency and act on the principle that time is of value only if it is used.

A YEAR'S WORK OF THE

1. PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH

Two pamphlets were published during the year. *Malayan Perspective*, by Derrick Sington, appeared in the Controversy Series in June. In December, *Opportunity in Kenya* was published in the Research Series. The latter embodied and expanded the conclusions of a sub-committee of the Advisory Committee set up to submit evidence to the Royal Commission on Agriculture in East Africa. Evidence was submitted in July. *Opportunity in Kenya* also contained two political chapters, in which an attempt was made to apply to Kenya the principles worked out in *Advance to Democracy* (1952). A study pamphlet on *Co-operation in the Colonies* was written for the Education Department of the Co-operative Union and published by the Union for use by co-operative groups in study courses.

Work continued on some of the internal aspects of economic development in the Colonies, with particular reference to their social implications. Detailed articles on the Cameroons Development Corporation were published in *Venture* in March, April, June and July, followed by a factual article on some aspects of the nationalised Gezira Scheme in the Sudan in October. Factual material on agricultural marketing funds was published in February and on the industrial colour bar in Northern Rhodesia in June. On the political side, every effort has been made to give members actual statements of policy from groups in the Colonies, and for this the *Colonial Opinion* column of *Venture* was used: e.g. African opinion in Kenya (January), European policy in Kenya (October), programmes in Malaya (November), Caribbean comments on the British Guiana crisis (December), and the statements of both sides in the Nigerian ministerial crisis (May). *Venture* also carried special articles on the Nigerian Conference decisions (October and November) and on travellers' impressions—by Mrs. Eirene White, M.P., on West Africa, and by E. M. K. Mulira of Uganda on his visit to the Rangoon Socialist Conference.

It had been the intention to start work on a reconsideration of the principles of colonial policy, but this was set aside to enable the Bureau to present evidence to the Royal Commission. This work is now being resumed. The failure of all attempts to persuade the Conservative Government to abandon or postpone the implementation of Federation in Central Africa had a profound effect on African opinion. Another disturbing influence was the intensification of Nationalist policy in South Africa. The most important development of the year has been the growing distrust of European policies throughout Africa, the most tragic manifestation of despair occurring in Kenya. The Bureau has therefore planned a series of pamphlets under the general heading *Approach to Africa* as a contribution to the general discussion of the problem of relations with Africa.

2. POLITICAL ACTION

A number of fundamental political issues arose in the course of the year. The fight against *Central African Federation* was continued until the final decision was taken. In January, the Bureau's officers met the members of the Nyasaland Chiefs' delegation. On March 12 the Minister of State received a deputation led by Lord Faringdon. Details of the federal scheme were discussed and postponement urged. A letter to *The Times* on amendments to the Enabling Bill was published on June 8. On July 20 the Secretary of State received a deputation to discuss the *Northern Rhodesia Constitution*. Contact with Central African organisations continues to be maintained.

In *West Africa*, there was a breakdown in the Nigerian Central Government followed by a conference of Nigerian politicians in London in July. This conference was secret, and there was no indication that the British Government was making any attempt to persuade or force the leaders to take decisions. No action on our part was necessary, but every effort was made to understand the viewpoints of the differing delegations. Nevertheless, the final decisions of the Conference, the by-passing of the Nigerian legislative bodies, and various other features of the Nigerian scene caused some concern. On December 18 the Secretary of State received a few members of the Advisory Committee who take a special interest in Nigeria. The meeting was for information purposes only.

Two major crises occurred towards the end of the year in which at the outset full information was not available. In the case of both the suspension of the constitution of British Guiana and of the deportation of the Kabaka of Buganda, the Bureau was able to supply background information to Members of Parliament at their request.

Information and suggestions were sent to Members of Parliament in both Houses for debates and questions. Questions in the House of Commons ranged over a very wide field, and included:

West Indies: Jamaican bauxite agreement, land settlement in Antigua, local government in Barbados, trade union membership, illiteracy and electoral machinery in British Guiana; *Sierra Leone:* taxation of diamond companies, co-operative societies, franchise in the Protectorate; *Gold Coast:* representation on the Agricultural Loans Board, co-operative representation on the Cocoa Marketing Board; *Togoland:* election of district councils, the Anglo-French Joint Council; *Nigeria:* transportation of groundnuts, co-operative farming schemes, pioneer palm oil mills, action on the Storey Report on the Lagos Town Council, representation at the London Conference; *East Africa:* Salaries Commission Report, racial taxation for social services; *Uganda:* co-operatives, trade union registration, prohibition of racial discrimination in hotels, future as an African state; *Kenya:* functions and composition of Labour and Wages Advisory Boards, registration of trade unions, forced labour, representation of African coffee producers at Coffee Conferences, expenditure on education, housing in Nairobi, African

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members on County Councils, changes in land tenure; *Tanganyika*: collection of cess through co-operatives, labour on sisal estates, composition of Northern Province Labour Utilisation Board; *Zanzibar*: Wages Advisory Board, education; *Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland*: Governor-General's statement on immigration, Rhodesian University; *Nyasaland*: land alienated to non-Africans, standing labour advisory boards, workers' compensation, Whitley Council; *Northern Rhodesia*: colour bar in Post Offices, constitutional changes, representation of Africans on municipal and township boards, alienation of Native Trust land, European demand for freehold land; *Southern Rhodesia*: representation in federal legislature; *Seychelles*: wages and reduction of copra duty; *Mauritius*: broadening of economy, pensions of teachers in aided schools; *Somaliland*: penal code, prison doctors; *Aden*: housing; *Fiji*: infant mortality and provision of milk, secret ballot; *North Borneo*: facilities for higher education; *Brunei*: vacancies and salaries in medical and health departments, administrative reform, banning of processions, budgetary surplus; *Hong Kong*: representation in legislature, rent control, unemployment; *Falkland Islands*: abandonment of Government newspaper; *Malaya*: Chinese schools, smallholders' co-operatives, progress of Development Plan, Whitley Council, electoral law of China and representation of overseas Chinese, Malay Regiment; *Singapore*: detainees, assistance to fishing industry, medical services; *General*: deportation in colonial territories, negotiating machinery for colonial service members, control of immigration.

3. MEETINGS

Following the visit to West Africa of the Labour Party delegation, Mrs. Eirene White, M.P., spoke at a Fabian lunch on February 20. On September 20 a meeting was held at Margate for delegates to the Labour Party Conference under the title *Colonial Challenge to Britain*. It was addressed by Dr. Rita Hinden, Mr. J. M. Peddie, Mr. F. W. Dalley and Mr. Reginald Sorensen, M.P., with Lord Faringdon in the chair. A full report, together with Conference decisions on colonial policy and a special article on the Conference discussion by Rita Hinden, was published under the title *Labour and the Colonies* in the November number of *Venture*. On October 23 a conference on *Commonwealth Future* was held in conjunction with the International Bureau at Pasture Wood under the direction of Mrs. Eirene White, M.P., and addressed by the Rt. Hon. James Griffiths, M.P., the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Listowel and the Rt. Hon. Hilary Marquand, M.P. On November 20 Dr. Rita Hinden addressed a Fabian lunch meeting on *Colonial Policy*.

There were several meetings for members of the Advisory Committee to exchange views with visitors from the Colonies. On February 3 the Advisory Committee joined with the Commonwealth and Colonies group of the Parliamentary Labour Party in a tea meeting for the Nyasaland Chiefs' delegation. On March 25 a meeting was held with Mr. Michael Blundell, leader of the European Elected Members in the Kenya Legislative Council. On April 23 Labour members of the delegations to the Conference on Caribbean Federation were entertained by the Advisory Committee. On June 4,

Lord Faringdon, on behalf of the Bureau, entertained members and friends of the Bureau who came as official visitors to the Coronation. On November 11 a meeting was held with Mr. E. A. Vasey, Finance Member of the Government of Kenya.

4. ORGANISATION

The year was notable for the number of members of the Bureau who were sent to the Colonies in various capacities. The Labour Party sent a delegation to West Africa in January, which included three members of the Bureau's Advisory Committee, the Rt. Hon. James Griffiths, M.P., Mrs. Eirene White, M.P., and Mr. Edward Farmer. In March Mr. Ronald Williams, M.P., was sent by the Miners' International Federation to present the case of the African Mine-workers' Union before an arbitration court in Northern Rhodesia. In December Mr. F. W. Dalley was invited by the Government of Trinidad to advise on trade union organisation and industrial relations, and the Rt. Hon. Arthur Bottomley, M.P., Mr. James Johnson, M.P., and Mr. Ronald Williams, M.P., were chosen as members of the all-party Parliamentary Delegation which went to Kenya in January, 1954. Many members of the Bureau from overseas called in at the office during visits to this country.

We have to report with great regret the deaths of two long-standing members of the Bureau. Sir Drummond Shiels, who was Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Colonial Office in the second Labour Government and served for several years on the Advisory Committee of the Bureau, died at the beginning of the year, and Mr. N. V. Rounce at the end. Mr. Rounce, who was a serving officer in the Agricultural Department in Tanganyika, was unable to play an active part in the work of the Bureau, but had been a member since 1945.

Mr. W. P. Watkins, Secretary of the International Co-operative Alliance, joined the Advisory Committee in a personal capacity in February. Otherwise the Advisory Committee was unchanged, and at the end of the year consisted of:

Chairman: Lord Faringdon; *Vice-Chairman*: Reginald Sorensen, M.P.; *Hon. Secretary*: Rita Hinden; *Hon. Treasurer*: Carol Johnson; *Secretary*: Marjorie Nicholson; *Assistant Secretary*: Hilda Selwyn-Clarke; and members of the Committee: Sir Richard Acland, M.P., H. N. Brailsford, Ritchie Calder, Margaret Cole, R. B. Wellesley Cole, F. W. Dalley, Tom Driberg, M.P., John Dugdale, M.P., E. G. Farmer, C. W. W. Greenidge, Rt. Hon. James Griffiths, M.P., Walter Hood, John Hynd, M.P., James Johnson, M.P., Rt. Hon. A. Creech Jones, W. Arthur Lewis, the Earl of Listowel, P.C., Kenneth Little, John Parker, M.P., John Rankin, M.P., F. W. Skinnard, H. W. Wallace, M.P., W. P. Watkins, Eirene White, M.P., Ronald Williams, M.P., Leonard Woolf.

We must again record our thanks to members of the Committee, to Members of Parliament who assist in the work of the Bureau, to contributors to *Venture*, especially Miss Molly Mortimer who contributed her *Trusteeship Column* throughout the year, to Mr.

Derrick Sington for his pamphlet *Malayan Perspective*, to the numerous members and friends who helped in the preparation of *Opportunity in Kenya*, and to all members in the Colonies who send in valuable information, advice and criticism from their experience on the spot. Special thanks are due to The Noel Buxton Trust and a private donor for very generous donations.

In the office, Mr. Charles Cannell continued to give his regular unpaid work each week, for which the Bureau is greatly indebted to him. In July, Miss Beryl Cross resigned, having been awarded the Mary Macarthur Scholarship for study at Ruskin College. This was a great loss, as Miss Cross had worked ably and enthusiastically in the Bureau since 1948, but all members will share in our pleasure that she has been given this opportunity for advanced study.

On December 31 there were 279 members subscribing to the Bureau only, as compared with 280 a year previously, but the Bureau suffered severely from a

drop in the £3 category of Fabian Society members from 941 to 880. The circulation of *Venture* continues to vary between 1,800 and 1,900, copies being supplied to Colonial Bureau and £3 members, 261 copies each month going to regular subscribers who are not members, and the balance being sold outside. Including supplies to members, the circulation of pamphlets varies from 3,000 to 4,000. These figures are still too small to provide a satisfactory financial basis for the Bureau. Although output has been maintained despite the cuts in staff made at the end of 1952, finance is a constant source of worry. In thanking all members for their support throughout the year it is necessary to express the hope that this will be maintained and increased in 1954.

FARINGDON, *Chairman.*

REGINALD SORENSEN, *Vice-Chairman.*

RITA HINDEN, *Hon. Secretary.*

CAROL JOHNSON, *Hon. Treasurer.*

CORRESPONDENCE

Partnership in Central Africa

Sir,—Before I read Mr. James Johnson's article, *Partnership—The Last Chance*, in *Venture* (March, 1954), I had been told that he had gone over to the Huggins party, but that is not shown in his very fair statement of the chances of a true multi-racial society in the new Federation. There are only one or two points on which he should be wary.

The new proposals for African Workers' Associations fall a long way short of the institution of real trade unions for Africans in Southern Rhodesia. The drawing together of 'native policies' of the three territories of the Federation will only be an advance if the Southern Rhodesian settlers are prepared to give a great deal more in the way of full citizenship to the Africans than they have at present. He quotes Mr. Savanhu as saying that only 10 per cent. of the Africans qualified to vote in Southern Rhodesia bothered to register, but that this would not happen at the next election. Even if an African has the financial qualification he may not have the ability to fill in the application form for registration correctly. At the last registration a number of Europeans refused to fill in the form because it was so exacting.

Mr. Johnson says that the Huggins-Welensky coalition have an overwhelming mandate. One-third of the votes in the Federal Election were cast for the Confederates who want apartheid, and this after only two months to organise a party in opposition to the long-established organisations of the leaders of the Federal Party. The following analysis shows the state of the parties in the Federation:

Federal Assembly

		Total Votes	Per cent. of Votes	Seats
Federal Party	...	34,992	67.2	24
Confederates	...	15,263	29.3	1
Independents	...	1,848	3.5	1

Southern Rhodesia Territorial Elections

	Votes	Per cent. of Votes	Seats
Federal Party (United Party)	15,631	55.9	26
Confederates	6,232	22.3	0
Various Independents and small parties	6,111	21.8	5
(6 Federals were returned unopposed.)			

Northern Rhodesia Territorial Elections

	Votes	Per cent. of Votes	Seats
Federal Party	4,550	54.3	10
Independents	3,827	45.7	2
(2 Federal Members were unopposed.)			

The Federal Party will not be able to afford to carry out any genuine policy of 'partnership' unless they bring more Africans on to the voters' roll, and that they will not do. The great hope for Central Africa is that investors want peace and skilled workers. The Federal Party wants investors.

Yours faithfully,

London, W.8.

Thomas Fox Pitt.

Sir,—It is pleasing to read in your March issue that Mr. James Johnson, M.P., is of the opinion that Central African Federation came just in time and that another five years would have been too late. People of a certain political creed in Britain urged last year that the Federation scheme should be delayed, but informed people in Central Africa knew quite well that it was a case of now or never. Confirmation of this view is welcomed.

Though it is correct that there is not one African doctor in Southern Rhodesia, it is also true that eight Africans from Southern Rhodesia are receiving Government bursaries for medical training, and these total £1,750 per annum. Regarding taxing the minority to provide for the majority, this has for

(Continued on page 12)

THE SPIRIT OF LIBERALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

IT is enough to recall only three measures that have been introduced by the Malan Government in the opening months of this year to warrant some scepticism in the minds of many reading the above title. Projects such as the limitation of public expenditure on Native Education, the Native Resettlement Bill to remove arbitrarily Africans who have freeholds in the Witwatersrand, and legislation projected with the obvious intention of killing African interest in trade unionism¹ all make a mockery of the spirit of liberalism. But there is fortunately another aspect of the situation which has called positive attention to itself in the rise of what is still termed the 'New' Liberal Party in South Africa. There is in this a concrete manifestation of a liberalism that has been growing steadily in the Union for the last 25 years.

Now that this spirit is finding fresh shape and purpose it is appropriate to remember that it has expressed itself in times earlier than many of us now living can recall. In the Cape Constitution of 1853 it was established that *all coloured peoples* were eligible for the franchise. In the early history of the troubles between Boers and British, when the former were constantly accusing the latter of 'siding with the savages,' one can trace the influence of the policy pursued by the missionaries towards the Negro as man and brother in shaping the British attitude towards the African. These passages of history serve to remind us that there is a heritage of racial tolerance and humanitarianism from which supposedly the Liberal Party of to-day has sprung, residing in deeper soil than that of purely political opportunism. And in that its strength lies.

There is evidence in the Union that, despite the acts of the Nationalist régime, organised liberalism is influencing public opinion in various ways in the strictly political field in which it had never been effective before the Liberal Party came into being. Indeed, the welcome given to the new Party has surprised even the thinking educated minority of people of British stock in South Africa itself. It is only now that they have a recognised platform and leadership that the spread of racial tolerance during the last two decades can be put to the test. Recognition of and support for it in this country may possibly be helpful in South Africa.

Branches of the Liberal Party have been formed in every town where there is any considerable British population. (In Natal, Alan Paton, author of *Cry the Beloved Country*, is the party leader.) But it is only now that they have a recognised platform and leadership that the spread of racial tolerance during the last two decades can be put to the test. Recognition of and support for it in this country may possibly be helpful in South Africa.

The trouble is that the unthinking—always the vast majority anywhere—are still swayed by fear instead of reason—fear of the immense superiority in numbers of the Native population, fear of the competition of cheap labour in the skilled and semi-skilled trades,

fear that political equality may result in African rule. Even immigrants who have not had time to be conditioned by this heritage of fear often say that they will support Malan because he knows how to 'keep the nigger in his place.'

As to educated African thought, this is still in a period of transition. Educated Africans are still a small minority, though their number increases every year. They are at present supplying the leaders of the anti-European movement because they are frustrated and bitter. Although some favour the principle of co-operation with the European, and have indeed joined the Liberal Party, there seems to be a fear that it has come too late and will be of no political value for years to come, while the more hostile regard it as a white man's device to keep them quiet. As African education advances the effect of liberal thought will begin to be seen as having a direct bearing on African ways of life.

One way in which the formation of a Liberal Party is influencing political thought and feeling may appear at present as a loss rather than a gain. It has much to do, for instance, with the recent divisions in the Opposition. Some who favour its principles and look to its ultimate authority hold the view that on a short-term policy the most important thing now is to combine against the Nationalists. To others it may well appear of less value that Malan should be succeeded by a Party whose views on Native policy have something in common with that of the Nationalists (even though for different reasons) than that liberal opinion should have time to permeate the *conscience* of the electorate, and the old fear give place to a more progressive and humanitarian sense of responsibility. Perhaps it is a fight with time. And yet one cannot fail to find encouragement in the knowledge that the number of Europeans who will take a risk is growing, and that many well-known names are to be found on the Liberal lists.

No thoughtful person in South Africa will admit to seeing much daylight at present in the racial confusion. There are too many warring motives. And yet it may not take quite so long as some fear for wisdom and self-interest to be seen to travel hand-in-hand in a country like South Africa. This may sound cynical; but mass-thought often requires the spur of mass-danger to move it to action. Unless the coloured races obtain palliatives to meet their present mood of frustration—and palliatives are not at present being offered—the white man may find that what he is fighting to hold will be wrenched from him by other than political means. Frustration which is coupled with a growing impulse towards racial advancement is not a static condition. It can inspire action. That may be brought home to those who are now slow to accept the implications in this healthy growth of the spirit of liberalism. They may accept it lest worse befall, and in doing so become imbued with the true liberal spirit, in spite of themselves.

¹ See *Trade Unions in South Africa*, T.U.C., Transport House, Smith Square, London, S.W.1. 6d.

L. C. M. Lockhart.

Parliament

Salary Scales in the Colonial Service. In reply to Mrs. Jeger, Mr. Foster said that in most territories basic salaries were paid to all officers according to their duties and responsibilities. In some territories expatriation or overseas pay was drawn in addition to basic pay by officers who did not belong to the country. In East and Central Africa, non-Europeans in senior grades of posts were at present paid three-fifths of the salary of a European. The matter was one of the questions before the Salaries Commission which was considering a revised salary structure for the East African Services. (March 3, 1954.)

Mrs. Jeger asked how many non-Europeans in colonial territories in Central Africa were receiving three-fifths of the salary of Europeans in equivalent posts; and what steps were being taken to end the discrimination. Mr. Lyttelton replied that there were 30 in Northern Rhodesia and 15 in Nyasaland. Both Governments intended to consider the matter further but were awaiting the report of the East African Salaries Commission which was expected in two or three weeks' time. (April 7.)

Election of African Members in Kenya. Mr. James Johnson asked what action was being taken regarding the implementation of direct elections for Africans at the next general election. Mr. Lyttelton replied that all unofficals who accepted appointment as Ministers would be invited to subscribe to the statement of policy which promised a study by Government of the best method of choosing African Members of the Legislative Council before 1956. In a supplementary question, Mr. Johnson urged that it would be an enormous and vital psychological gesture if it were implemented as, so far, Asians and Europeans had direct elections, but not the Africans. Mr. Lyttelton added that care should be taken in the use of the word 'direct.' All that was promised was a study of how to broaden the basis upon which African members were elected. It might be by what was usually called direct methods, or by a system of electoral colleges, but the method would not be determined until a study had been made. Mr. Lyttelton, in answer to a further supplementary question by Mr. Griffiths, said that the body which would be set up would be predominantly African, but they would require to obtain the services of an expert in matters of franchise and constitutional practice to assist them. (April 7.)

Sugar Price Stabilisation Fund in British Guiana. In answer to Mr. D. T. Jones, Mr. Lyttelton said that the Sugar Price Stabilisation Fund totalled \$5,569,067 at December 31, \$2,500,000 had been diverted from the Stabilisation Fund to the Labour Welfare Fund, which existed for housing and welfare work of the plantation employees. This sum would speed up the rehousing of sugar estate workers. (April 7.)

Immigrants into N. Rhodesia. In reply to Mr. James Johnson, Mr. Lyttelton said that of the 8,861 immigrants last year, 3,793 stated that the Union of South Africa had been their last place of residence. (April 8.)

Trade Unions in Singapore and Malaya. Mr. Sorensen asked whether the Colonial Secretary would recommend to the Malayan and Singapore Governments that trade unions should be allowed to affiliate to political organisations as in this country. Mr. Lyttelton replied that this was an issue for the Malayan and Singapore trade unions to pursue for themselves with the local Governments if they were anxious for a change. (March 31.)

Political activities of the Civil Service in Malaya. Mr. Sorensen asked what grades of civil servants in Malaya were prohibited from political activities; whether this prohibition extended to membership of political parties; and whether teachers and nurses came within this prohibition. Mr. Lyttelton said that this question had been dealt with by the recent Constitutional Committee in the Federation. The recommendations were under consideration. The Government of Singapore had decided that the Civil Service should be divided into two groups, the senior of which would be prohibited from taking an active part in politics. Mr. Lyttelton added that he would make an enquiry into the effect of this on teachers and nurses and would write to Mr. Sorensen. (March 31.)

Inter-racial Whitley Council, Tanganyika. In reply to Mr. H. Hynd, Mr. Lyttelton said that the establishment of a Whitley Council had been under discussion with the three service associations. A salaries commission was at present reviewing conditions of service under the Tanganyika Government and the commission's recommendations might result in some reorganisation of the service and some variation in the method of staff representation. It had been agreed by the service associations that, in the circumstances, it would be best to defer the formation of a Whitley Council until the recommendations on salaries revision were known. (March 30.)

Land acquisition by Government officials, Tanganyika. In reply to a question by Mr. Rankin, Mr. Lyttelton said that serving Government officials could acquire land subject to the approval of the Governor-in-Council) and to satisfactory assurance that it was required for purposes of future residence or farming, and not for speculation. Normally, approval for the acquisition of land was given to officers only in their final tour of service, and where it was expected that they would, on retirement, become permanent residents in the territory. (March 24.)

Guide to Books

Colonial Social Accounting

By Phyllis Deane. (Cambridge University Press, 50s.)

Anyone interested in colonial economics or economic policy for under-developed countries should read this book, which is published in the Economic and Social Studies Series of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research. In the more highly developed countries of Europe and America the political commitment of maintaining full employment has, during the past twenty years, compelled governments to assume a much greater responsibility for economic affairs. An elaborate apparatus of statistical information and economic analysis has been developed to meet these wider needs of economic policy. Colonial governments have, in contrast, been reluctant to pursue active economic policies: there has been little or no conscious planning, and financial policy has been merely a matter of raising money to cover the cost of administration. 'Development Plans' have not really been plans at all, but simply well-intentioned, piecemeal schemes of spending money in socially desirable directions. Unless plans for economic development are based on adequate statistical information and proper economic analysis, they have little chance of success. Existing colonial administrations are being forced to adopt a more positive attitude to their economic policies, and the pressure for self-government is reinforcing this tendency. In the Gold Coast, for instance, Dr. Nkrumah's Government finds itself in much greater need of reliable statistics and a full economic survey than governments with a less positive attitude towards development.

Miss Deane's book shows how modern national income methods can be adapted to the problems of under-developed economies. The subject is technical; but Miss Deane writes well enough to make the book one for the general reader as well as the specialist. The book falls into three parts. The first describes the structure of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland in terms of the social accounts of the two territories. This shows the kind of statistical groundwork which the economist and the administrator need as a basis for framing economic policies. This approach involves pulling together diverse pieces of information on production, foreign trade, wages, incomes, and so on, to give a picture of the main economic transactions in the territories. The accounts provide a frame of reference: Miss Deane constructs from them a surprisingly complete picture. Those accustomed to the completely inadequate statistics which are usually made available will be astonished at how much can be done. The second part describes field investigations of the rural communities of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. For the specialist—anthropologist and sociologist as well as economist and statistician—this study of subsistence communities is the most interesting part of the book, and the

part in which Miss Deane breaks most new ground (at least to this reviewer). It gives a great deal of insight into the economic life of these communities. Miss Deane's treatment of the technical difficulties is usually sound and always interesting—though some of the problems are still controversial. She is aware of most of the difficulties: her scepticism in measuring changes in productivity in subsistence agriculture, for instance, is a useful warning of the limitations involved in work of this sort.

In the last section Miss Deane tries to assess the significance of her work. She draws attention to the unreliability of the data and to methodological difficulties which remain unsolved. Her conclusions are modest, but the book remains an important contribution to the study of colonial economic problems.

L. B. Arnell.

SHORT NOTICES

What is Imperialism? by Edward Atiyah (Batchworth Press, 1s. 6d.). This short pamphlet in the *Background Specials* Series is of interest chiefly because the writer, a Lebanese with many years' experience of the Sudan, is able to approach the problem of imperialism completely objectively, despite, for example, his bitter disappointment with British policy in Palestine. He is satisfied that most British Colonies are proceeding towards independence, but anxious about British and French territories in Africa where settlers are 'emerging as a separate entity, distinct both from their compatriots in Europe and their new compatriots in Africa.' He dislikes French assimilation, but recognises in it 'a respect for all men, regardless of race or colour.' The basic conception of the later period of the Dutch empire is considered to be trusteeship, but the Belgians 'seem to have the same attitude. . . whether they are residents in the territory or policy-makers in the mother country.' Mr. Atiyah has drawn his material on the Soviet Empire largely from Mr. Walter Kolarz.

Socialist Follies in Opposition (Notes on Current Politics No. 3, Conservative Research Department, 6d.) Most of this hotch-potch of quotations and comment can be answered by any reasonably well-informed Socialist, but as far as colonial affairs are concerned, it carries a warning. It is, for example, most regrettable that its totally unsupported assertion that 'between 1945 and 1951, the responsibility of office brought the Socialists face to face with realities and led them to abandon many of the old impractical Fabian theories' can be matched by the equally unsupported statement from a Socialist weekly that 'very few Socialist ex-Ministers are yet prepared to admit . . . that they themselves were forced to depart from the principles which they are now once again free to preach. . .'. Some study of what Labour *did* do in office seems to be needed. *The Way Forward* (1s. 6d.), published by the Fabian Colonial Bureau in November, 1950, provides an excellent starting point.

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many years been the policy in Southern Rhodesia, and the major cost of developing the African and providing for his services has been borne by the European. As an illustration the cost of African education alone is already more than double the amount paid in native taxation, and the European taxpayer pays the balance. I have no doubt the same principle will continue in Central Africa.

Yours faithfully,
Percy Ibbotson, M.P.

Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia.

Those Sterling Balances

Sir,—My attention has been drawn to an article with the title *Those Sterling Balances* by Thomas Balogh in your March issue in which he says that I 'was commissioned under a Labour Government' to make a report on something he does not specify, but on the basis of which, he says, the Colonial Office has come to a conclusion that leads him to lengthy expostulation. I want to say that I have never been commissioned to prepare a report on any subject to any Government. If Mr. Balogh is referring to the *Memorandum on the Sterling Assets of the Colonies* published by the Colonial Office, I had nothing to do with it. If he means to refer to my study, *Colonial Monetary Conditions*, which was done under the auspices of the Colonial Economic Research Committee, he shows very little acquaintance with its contents. As for this one accurate reference to a trivial remark in a footnote, I do not remember the appetite for 'constructive criticism' being noticeable among the people who were urging the squandering of large sums of public money in the Colonies in the name of Development in 1946-50, and surely 'constructive criticism' is out of place on a tombstone.

Yours faithfully,
Ida Greaves.

Jamaica.

All Fabians

Sir,—In the comment entitled *East Africa* in the March number of *Venture* you make reference to the fact that two of the Labour members of the Parliamentary delegation to Kenya, Mr. James Johnson and Mr. Ronald Williams, are members of the Fabian Colonial Bureau's Advisory Committee. May I point

out that the Rt. Hon. A. G. Bottomley, O.B.E., M.P., who was the official leader of the Labour group on the mission, is a prominent member of the Walthamstow Fabian Society.

Yours faithfully,
Doreen Wyld
(Secretary, Walthamstow Fabian Society).

(Continued from page 2)

At the Labour Party Conference at Margate, the Bureau made a start in putting this point of view before a wider audience within the movement. During the winter, there have been more calls for speakers for meetings than ever before. Yet much the largest part of the field remains untouched. A large proportion of members even of the Fabian Society do not subscribe to Bureau publications or, as far as we know, take any interest whatsoever in colonial affairs. The only remedy is much greater activity by members of the Bureau and the Society who do support its colonial work—not only in recruiting members and assisting in the sale of publications, but also in undertaking sustained and serious study of specific aspects of colonial policy.

A knowledge of colonial questions should be an essential part of the equipment of every British Socialist, without this, he remains blind to British responsibilities, to the aspirations of Colonial peoples, and to a problem of world dimensions which it is folly to neglect. Because we believe there are major policy issues which must be faced while there is yet time, and that there is an important task before us, we are calling together all members of the Bureau to discuss our work on May 15. We hope that there will be a good response from members and that the problems will be squarely faced. Those who are unable to attend, including our overseas members and readers, are invited to send their comments for consideration at the meeting or later in these pages. Only by a major effort can we make the contribution, of our own kind, which the British movement and the Colonies so badly need.

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